

The Role of Transboundary Community Social-Cultural Orientation on Terrorism Management Along the Southern Kenya-Somalia Border

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Abstract

The social-cultural orientation of the community along the southern Kenya-Somalia border and international terrorism have a very complex and multifaceted relationship. Terrorist recruitment and operations may be facilitated or hindered by social and cultural factors. This study sought to understand the role of transboundary community social-cultural orientation on terrorism management along the southern Kenya Somalia border. The study was conducted along the southern Kenya Somalia border because of high incidences of cross border terror attacks. Constructivism theory was adopted. A combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods was used. Questionnaires, Focus Group Discussions and Key Informant Interviews were used. A sample of 400 respondents was drawn from a population of 942,128 residing along the study area using Cluster, purposive and snowballing sampling techniques. Quantitative data was analyzed descriptively and inferentially while qualitative data were analyzed thematically in which concepts were identified and emerging themes generated and presented in narrative form. All ethical issues were observed. The study recommends that counterterrorism strategies should actively incorporate socio-cultural considerations. Engaging local leaders and utilizing cultural norms to foster trust can enhance cooperation between border communities and law enforcement, leading to improved information sharing and reduced terrorist attacks.

Key Words: International Terrorism, border security, constructivism theory, Social-cultural orientation

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1. Introduction

There is no research that indicates someone is predisposed to being a violent extremist or a terrorist. Thus, outside a variable such as socio-cultural orientation (Ozer, Grossman, Hadfield, Jefferies, Gerrand & Ungar, 2020) may unintentionally make people more susceptible to being brainwashed into violent extremism and terrorism. Using violence to further individual and collective objectives linked to political, religious, and cultural beliefs is known as terrorism.

Moghaddam and Marsellad (2004) contend the cultural and social contexts in the terrorists' local environment have an impact on their activities, irrespective of their religious or ideological goals. Furthermore, they contend that terrorist groups are ingrained in a community's narratives and arise from a larger culture. Community members' decisions are undoubtedly their own, but social and cultural orientation might influence them.

According to Berger, (2018), terrorism is belief that an in-group's survival can never be separated from the need for violent action against an out-group. This suggests that stories of violent extremism can emanate from nearly any kind of doctrine or religion. The development of violent extremist narratives is a result of the way groups construct their views about the ingroup and its relationship to others. Political or religious ideology, according to Malthaner and Waldmann (2014), gives personal opinions and sentiments a collective meaning, a broader context, and inclusivity. They give violent action a structure and a purpose, which causes individuals to become radicalised and turn to terrorism.

The study sought to address Borum's (2011) suggestion that socio-cultural orientation be examined as a predictor of terrorism and violent extremism in future studies on international terrorism. It has long been known that people's decisions on a variety of topics are significantly influenced by their social and cultural orientation. According to Borum's research, a person's sociocultural orientation towards collective ideals that are shaped by

society is strongly correlated with their participation in what is known as "international terrorism." Thus, the purpose of this research is to gain a better understanding of the relationship between the management of international terrorism along the southern Kenya-Somalia border and the social-cultural orientation of the community.

There appear to be relatively few social-cultural studies on terrorism in East Africa, especially Kenya, despite the fact that these studies are constantly expanding. Therefore, it is impossible to overstate the significance of the current study, which attempts to comprehend the relationship between social-cultural orientation and the control of international terrorism along the southern Kenya-Somalia border. According to Mogire and Nkutu (2016), social-cultural orientation can either control terrorism or radicalise individuals into it. This study shows that the socio-cultural norms of the border community have a substantial impact on the management of international terrorism, given the connection between this socio-cultural perspective and international terrorism. In the end, by examining fundamental reasons, this study may help design strategies for combating radicalisation to violent extremism. These strategies can be more effective and social-culturally adaptable.

2. Statement of the Problem

Due to the expansion of al-Shabab's terror campaign, which originated in Somalia, cross-border terrorism is especially common in the southern Kenya-Somalia border. Nearly 22,000 people have died in the Horn of Africa as a result of the terrorists' involvement in more than 8,400 incidents since 2008. Despite a 17% drop in terrorism-related fatalities in 2023, al-Shabab remained among the top four terrorist organisations worldwide (Global Terror Index, 2024).

Despite the fact that counter terrorism measures have been formulated by the United Nations and Africa Union to manage international terrorism (Rosendorff & Sandler, 2012), there seems to be a discernible difference on how nation-states employ them. In October 2011, the Kenya government sent her Kenya Defense Forces (KDF) to Somalia to fight Al-Shabaab following terror attacks along her border with Somalia (Oluoch, 2014). As a result, terrorists' actions have intensified as more force is employed to try to neutralise them, rendering the Kenyan government's coercive measures ineffective (Martin, 2011)

Managing international terrorism along porous borders necessitates a bottom-up approach that takes into account the social and cultural inclinations of grassroots leaders and the community (Lederach, 1997). The failure to combat terrorism along the border is due in part to a top-down, state-centric peacebuilding model which ignores the community level approaches. Terrorists' actions have intensified as more force is employed to try to neutralise them, rendering the Kenyan government's coercive measures useless (Martin, 2011). The failure to combat terrorism along the border is due in part to a top-down, state-centric peacebuilding model. Managing terrorism along this porous border necessitates a bottom-up approach that takes into account the social and cultural inclinations of grassroots leaders. Kenya's long strained tenuous relationship with Somalia may to some extent weakened the foundation on which social-cultural orientation may manage international terrorism, despite the government's efforts to improve community policing mechanisms, tighten border controls, and counter-radicalization activities.

3. Literature Review

3.1 Historical development of Kenya- Somalia border

The Kenya and Somalia border runs 681 kilometres (423 miles) from the Ethiopian border to the Indian Ocean. It was initially defined in 1891 when Italy and the United Kingdom split their African spheres of influence (Lewis 2009). In 1924, a major piece of former British Kenyan territory known as Juba land was transferred to Italian Somaliland, resulting in the establishment and marking of a new straight-line border. Some of the factors contributing to the current boundary disputes between Somalia and Kenya include the history of colonial control and the division of ethnic Somalis between the two republics after independence.

Simala & Arrous, (2009) assert that Kenya fought for self-determination and independence in all regions, including the disputed border districts on the Northern Frontier. According to Article 5(4) of the Republic of Somalia's Constitution of 1960 (2011), ethnic Somalis occupied Somalia's borders. During several colonial governments, Somalia witnessed areas populated by ethnic Somalis demand independence. Though the Somali government viewed the matter as a colonial issue, it has continued to strain the relations with Kenya. Kenya insisted on upholding its borders delineated by the colonial authority after attaining independence (Kenya House of Representatives Debates, 1963).

According to Okumu (2011), newly independent African states had two options in terms of colonially established borders: they could either maintain the status quo by accepting the flaws in colonial partitions, with all of the consequences that entails, or they could make an effort to redesign the borders. Africa's postcolonial governments prioritised economic development and social cohesiveness for the people who live within their countries. All African countries resolved to maintain the current geographical status quo under the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) supervision because they recognised that "any attempt to redraw the frontiers on ethnic, racial, or linguistic grounds would lead to a 'domino effect' (AU, 2007). According to the "domino effect" theory, if one state on the African continent successfully gains statehood, it could set off a chain reaction of similar aspirations for self-determination, resulting in instability and catastrophe (Hoehne, 2019)

According to Bakpetu (2015) and Nene (2005), the history of border disputes between Kenya and Somalia, which culminated in the Shifta War from 1963 to 1968, has had an impact on peace along the Kenya-Somalia border. Adar (2003) contends that the marking of Kenya-Somalia boundary crossings was done for the political purposes of Britain and Italy rather than the homogeneity of the societies, cultures, and histories. In actuality, the border between Kenya and Somalia exemplifies how an artificial barrier has divided groups of people who are linked by shared history and culture. After Kenya and Somalia won independence, the boundaries' role shifted from acting as a demarcation line between numerous colonial regions to serving as a border between independent countries. As a result, the Somali ethnic minority in the borderlands formed a new social identity.

The Somali population in Kenya's Northern Frontier District rebelled and sought self-determination, as well as the Somali Republic's efforts to unite all of the Somali-inhabited territories. Bakpetu (2015) and Nene (2005), argues that the history of border disputes between Kenya and Somalia, which culminated in the Shifta War from 1963 to 1968. Kenya's first president, Jomo Kenyatta, remarked that the Kenya-Somalia line is of great importance to Kenya and that there is no room for argument because the boundary has been clearly delineated (Adar, 2003). As a result of these developments, peace along Kenya's border with Somalia has suffered.

3.2 Transboundary socio-cultural orientation and terrorism management along the southern Kenya-Somalia border.

International terrorist attacks target a people's cultural identity, in addition to causing physical harm or destruction to monuments, churches, or symbols of a particular culture and way of life. Some social-cultural characteristics might nurture terrorism in a variety of ways. Poverty, strained relations, disregard for human rights, and a sense of unfairness among these communities provide fertile ground for international terrorism. Creating a culture of tolerance, dialogue, understanding, respect, and pluralism would help to decrease the heroic aura associated with terrorist recruitment (The European Parliamentary Assembly, 2004).

Despite the aforementioned obstacles, the situation has deteriorated dramatically near the southern Kenya-Somalia border (IOM, 2015), necessitating the presence of numerous cadres of Kenya and Somalia security officers. The porousness of this border has allowed for the smuggling of both people and products. Other security issues include carjacking, abduction, drug trafficking, land mines, and improvised explosive devices (IED's) which have impacted negatively on the livelihood of the border communities.

The southern Kenya-Somalia border, which is sparsely populated, has been identified as an ideal location for international terrorism. Porous borders, rough terrain, unimproved roads, various seasonal rivers, woods, its proximity to Dadaab refugee camp, corruption of local and national government officials at the border, a lack of trust and social cohesion in the Kenyan social fabric, and, ultimately, insecurity from border clan conflicts have all posed a challenge to the border since they provide fertile ground for terrorists' expansion. According to Morland (2010), the vast majority of persons entering Kenya over the southern Kenya-Somalia border via unauthorised crossing porous points are refugees and terrorists.

According to Kenya National Assembly Official Record (Hansard) 2006, these terrorists' fears exhibit a significant linkage with the social-cultural orientation of the border community. Terrorist organisations for example Al Shabaab employ propagation of propaganda and recruitment along the Kenya-Somalia border to establish a network of local communities to achieve their goals. They achieve this through criminal networks, the non-profit sector, and social, educational, and religious institutions (Kenya National Counter-Terrorism Strategy, 2016) Understanding the social-cultural orientation of these communities can assist the Kenyan government to formulate effective counter terrorism measures.

Lederach (1997) argue that peacebuilding is the long-term transition of a war system into a peace system. He

created a pyramid model of three levels to explain how sustained peacebuilding might be achieved in regions of insecurity. These include top-level leadership (top-down approach), middle-level leadership (middle-out approach), and grassroots leadership (bottom-up approach) (Okpokwu 2016:13). This study applies Lederach's conceptualisation of bottom-up approach in the management of international terrorism in the region. The study further agrees with Olsen 2018 who argues that the 2011 Kenya's state-centric military intervention in Somalia (top- bottom approach) has contributed to insecurity along the border as it excluded the border community leadership (grassroot leadership). The study also agrees with Balthasar 2017, who suggests that the Lederach bottom-up approach can be applied to the development of counterterrorism policies in Kenya and the region.

3.2.1 Culture and terrorism management along the southern Kenya- Somalia border

A society's culture can provide insight into the fundamental beliefs and actions of a terrorist organization. Terrorist analysts can learn more about how a terrorist cell operates, which could help governments lessen the threat that particular terrorist organizations pose. Culture can provide insight into how some groups rationalize terrorist attacks. The way the general public reacts to acts of terrorism may be influenced by cultural factors. Cultures can support terrorism in a number of ways. Extreme poverty, historical strained relations, religious intolerance, unemployment, political instability, and radicalization are characteristics of many cultures that could serve as inspiration for certain terrorist acts. In 2023, The National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) found a correlation between a rise in terrorist attacks and societal norms and beliefs that promote rigid thinking. Societies with high standards, severe punishments for violating them (cultural tightness), and a sense that ideological belief defines one's destiny.

Hofstede (1980) spent a lot of time researching psychological variations brought on by cultural values. For national cultures and values worldwide, he established construct validity of four dimensions. Out of these four dimensions, collectivism dimension is relevant to this study. This dimension emphasises the extent to which an individual puts the demands of the group ahead of their own. In other words, societies experiencing similar historical injustices tend to be collective in fighting for their justice. For instance, the Somali communities in the Northeastern regions of Kenya experienced the history of border disputes between Kenya and Somalia, which culminated in the Shifta War from 1963 to 1968. These societies have high level of collectiveness in fighting injustices from the Kenya government. This explains why some prefer to join al-Shabab due to failure by the government to issue them with National Identity Cards and provide employment.

The collectivism aspect of Hofstede places a strong emphasis on cooperation and group activities, where terrorists are impacted by the rules and responsibilities set by their cells. According to Schwartz (2005) and Post (2005), a terrorist's interests are entwined with those of the group they represent. Similarly, Wieden-haefer et al. (2007) confirm that the preservation of cultural traditions was a primary aim of many terrorist acts. According to Creshaw (1992), establishing and upholding a common set of values that links overall ideological orientation to the environment in which a group operates is an essential component of leadership. These remarks are relevant to the present study since the goals of al-Shabab terrorists are usually more centred on carrying out terrorist attacks in Kenya, especially along the Kenya-Somalia border, than on taking care of their own needs as individuals.

Some features of a community's culture can help us understand violent events, while others might not. Terrorism's origins, nature, and prevalence are influenced by historical memories of injustice. The historical disputes between the governments of Kenya and Somalia over the North Eastern Province, for instance, may be the cause of the rise in terrorist attacks near the southern Kenya-Somalia border. British colonial rulers created an arbitrary border between Kenya and Somalia, which caused the Somali community to split into Kenyan Somalis and Somalia Somalis. These border communities' culture has been profoundly impacted by this terrible experience, which has finally led to its members joining al-Shabab.

3.2.2 Religion and the Management of Terrorism along the southern Kenya- Somalia border

Religion is an ancient institution which is characterised as the association of worldviews and beliefs that correlate to a metaphysical being. Therefore, people perception of themselves and their relationships with others is influenced by their religion. According to Brannan (2007), religion fulfils a societal role by offering a meaningful framework for comprehending the world, together with norms and standards of behaviour that connect people's actions and objectives to this crucial framework. Additionally, religion links people to a greater whole and, on occasion, by offering institutions that aid in defining and organising that whole and by giving legitimacy to certain behaviours and establishments.

Even though religion is a delicate subject that needs to be treated with extreme caution in any discussion or debate, it can be utilised as a social force in managing international terrorism. Many people view religion as a

comprehensive way of life based on moral behaviour and faith in God. Its function in society is determined by political, economic, and cultural factors. Rather than being driven by form, ceremony, and symbolism, religion should be driven by justice, love, and compassion—values that are highly valued in all societies. Despite the fact that everyone has the right to express their religious thoughts whenever they see fit, it's crucial to consider the consequences. Extreme emotions might occur when people express their religious ideas because some others may interpret them incorrectly and reject them. For example, the divisions between Muslims and Christians in the way they express their religious ideas has been the conducive for growth of terrorism.

Religion has helped control terrorism even if it has been used as a weapon of war to justify terrorism for millennia. Christian traditions provide indications of scriptural calls for compassion and empathy in the Book of Matthew Chapter 7 and Luke Chapter 6. Chapter 7 of the book of Mathew states: "Avoid passing judgement or you will be judged as well. Because you will be judged in the same manner that you assess others, and you will be measured according to the same standards that you employ. Don't throw your pearls to pigs; don't offer dogs what is sacred. If you do, they might turn and rip you to pieces and trample them underfoot. Furthermore, in the book of Luke Chapter 6, it states that while Jesus was among his disciples, he said, "I ask you, which is permitted on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to preserve life or to destroy it? These rreligious convictions and beliefs call for restraint and non-retaliation to prevent people from engaging in evil acts as in the case of terrorism.

The political violence that occurred in Northern Ireland after 1968 provides evidence in favour of this assertion. Religious dedication and convictions in this case required people to be restrained, not seek revenge, and not behave like heartless terrorists. Likewise, there are some of the most well-known voices opposing religious extremism in Muslim traditions (US Department of Justice.1981). In the most overtly Muslim terminology, these voices have been defending their opposition to terrorist brutality. Warlike violence, for instance, is only allowed in self-defence when armed attackers are directly threatening, according to the Quran (Quran, 2:190; 4:75; 8:19 and 9:12-13). Unless this is the case, killing people is murder (Quran, 5:32).

According to a study by Crenshaw (1981), some religious Islam's ideologies may be misunderstood and used to support for terrorism as in in the Middle East, the Philippines, and Thailand. Like most religions, he says, Islam has a big impact on the identity and morals of its followers, which pushes terrorists to the limit and makes them more dangerous. These religious terrorists use Islam faith to justify their actions and personalise the conflict by bringing up Islam. Similarly, in 2015, religious terrorists used Islam as a justification for their attack on Garissa University College in Kenya. According to Mekhennet, Sautter, and Hanfeld (2008), religious terrorists use religion as a social component to create a caliphate in Muslim communities, which leads to radicalisation into terrorism.

3.2.3 Religion and the Management of terrorism along the Southern Kenya- Somalia border

In the border communities along the southern Kenya-Somalia border, religion, ethnicity, and language are all rather dominant (Samatar, 2001). The majority of the population is made up of ethnic Somalis, who are devout Muslims. Their political, social, and economic domains are all strongly rooted in their commitment to Islam. Many Muslims left Somalia as refugees after Siyad Bare's government fell in 1991 (Okoth, 2010). Muslim communities near this border have benefited from Gulf countries' educational scholarships. The region is also home to a large number of mosques, madrasas, and Islamic educational institutions. Both countries are home to highly developed Islamic cultures and intellectuals, and many of their graduates and clerics later go to other parts of Kenya in order to accomplish their religious duties.

Along the southern Kenya-Somalia border, Islam still has a big influence on day-to-day living. There is a very high level of religious consciousness, which is demonstrated by the important positions and authority that religious leaders hold in addition to the cultures of consumption, dress, and food. Higher levels of Islamic education and religious practice are to blame for this. Al Shabaab, a terrorist group, feeds on ignorance of Islam at the request of extremist voices. According to Behr (2018), Al-shabaab gathers zakat, or profits, from the border villages along the Kenya-Somalia border. Zakat, often known as alms, is the third pillar of Islam and is used by Muslims to cleanse and purify themselves. The poor in society gain from it as well as benefiting the provider. However, during a field study in Garissa County, a sheikh at the Islamia House Mosque in Garissa Town claims the Al-Shabaab's practice of requiring border communities to pay Zakat is against Islamic teachings. Although it depends on the intention to pay, zakat is a mandatory contribution in Islam. Border villages use a range of animals, such as goats, cows, and camels, as part of their Zakat payments. In order to make money, the Al-Shabaab collect zakat, which makes border communities—who are primarily pastoralists—feel insecure.

A Muslim clergyman living along the border between Southern Kenya and Somalia explains the connection between Islam and international terrorism by pointing to the misreading and misinterpretation of the Quran's teachings. He said that foreigners who travelled to the Horn of Africa for that reason were responsible for the religious terrorism. These foreign fighters have used the porous border between Kenya and Somalia, a weak rule of law, and insufficient administration to get the kind of shelter required to operate. Furthermore, the southern Kenya and Somalia border is an area with substantial Muslim populations where foreigners have successfully established their cells without drawing suspicion from the Kenya security agencies (Rosenau, 2005).

3.2.4 Social identity as manifestation of Somali clan allegiance and its impact on management of terrorism along the Southern Kenya-Somalia border:

3.2.4.1: Social Identity of the communities along Kenya- Somalia border

Dizayi (2015) asserts that social identity is defined as the similarity among a political entity, a group of individuals, a set of views, and physical characteristics. Through acts or recognition of the meanings in their surroundings, identities are established by moulding and reshaping the meanings of various objects and people to the point where the creator and the created object come to a shared understanding (Lebow, 2011). Certain identities are associated with outward characteristics such as nose size and shape, skin colour, and hair type. But these characteristics by themselves don't establish identities; throughout time, for certain reasons, they acquire meanings that are shaped by politics and society. This could involve associating a person's physical characteristics with their native country.

According to Rothmyer (2018), a people's social identity, cultural traditions, and language all serve as representations of their way of life and customs. A specific group of people is defined by its language, religion, and everyday customs, all of which contribute to the formation of their social identity. A people's ideas, which are passed down to the following generation, are related to their social identities (Zezeza, 2017).

Communities along the southern Kenya-Somalia border have a shared social identity, historical experience, a shared threat, and a shared set of requirements. When the Kenyan government fails to meet fundamental safety and security demands in the face of violent extremism, these identities are more likely to be mobilised, and people in the region are more likely to identify with al-Shabab than with the political state. In other words, it is comparatively simple for al-Shabab militants to recruit more border community people to operate in their favour in such a marginalised setting. According to Thomas (2005), this is particularly true when members of border communities have experienced historical injustices during their early years and government's unwillingness to contribute to development of their region.

3.2.4.2: Somali clan allegiance along the southern Kenya- Somalia border

In Somalia, clans are a sociocultural consensus derived from patriarchal ancestry, and clannism is a political ideology that shapes many facets of administration, such as power dynamics and territorial access (Dirshe, 2013). The Hawiye and the Darod are the two most common Somali clans. Abagaal, Habargedir, Hawadle, Mursade, Rahwein, Murule, Ajuran, and Garre are only a few of the many sub-clans that make up the Hawiye clan, which is acknowledged as the main ruling group. On the other hand, the Harti, Marehan, and Ogaden tribes make up the Darod clan. While a sizable fraction of these clans lives in Somalia, sizable numbers have also migrated to and inhabit areas in the Middle East, South Asia, the United States, Europe, Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti, and Yemen. The Ogaden clan of ethnic Somalis make up the majority of the population in the border region between southern Kenya and Somalia. The Aulihan and the Abudwak or Audak are sub-clans of the Ogaden lineage; the latter have strong ties to the Abdallah, who are also found in Lamu County's southern areas along the Kenya-Somalia border (Robie, 2013).

Clan households are a significant social group in Somalia, according to Adar (2003), and they are rooted in the country's political and economic systems. Things that happen in southern Somalia have significant effects on the security dynamics that affect the clans along the southern Kenya-Somalia border. The two biggest changes over time have been the rise in terrorist attacks and the flow of commodities and persons, both legal and illegal, across the border between Somalia and southern Kenya. These movements have a lot to do with cross-border clan ties. Since the fall of the Siad Barre rule in 1991 and anarchy that followed, the al Shabab terrorist group has continued to attack the majority of Somalia's clan along the border (Mehkhaus, 2015).

According to Behr, 2018. border communities have "rigidify" the Kenya-Somalia border, and clan rivalries, Al-Shabab's opportunistic tactics, and the apparent bribery or threats of force used to obtain Kenyan identity documents make it unsafe. One factor contributing to the rigidity of the Kenya-Somalia boundary is the Somali

"caste system," wherein certain clans regard others as inferior while others are superior. For example, the Rahanweyn clan is one example, which is considered to be either half-Somali or not. According to the interview conducted in Garissa County in Kenya, a top official at the Garissa County government, stated that Somali communities view themselves as "half-Somali or not Somalis."

Nur (2023) asserts, however, that due to primal clannism and sub-clannism, the Kenya-Somalia border has a significant impact on internal conflicts, resulting in intra- and interwar conflicts. He goes on to say that Somali clans are at the heart of Somali identity, which shapes politics. The terrorist organisation Al Shabaab uses the clan as a powerful mobilising tool to appease the grievances of border communities soby claiming to have solutions to their problems. According to Amutabi (1995), resource scarcity frequently leads to conflicts in the North Eastern Province (NEP), which intensifies militarisation as various Somali ethnic groups gather weapons to ensure their survival. Moreover, southern Kenya-Somalia border is one area where the government has limited power to enforce its laws. Because of Somalia's anarchy, border communities are forced to rely on traditional leaders and tribal or clan militias, some of which are linked to the terrorist group Al Shabaab.

Along the southern Kenya-Somalia border, terrorist organisations are operating in an environment that is made easier by the growing urbanisation of Dadaab and Garissa town. According to a summary by the UN Monitoring Group for Somalia and Eritrea, the southern Kenya-Somalia border (Dhobley, Fafi, Ijara, Lagdera) is a key transit area for items smuggled into Kenya, such as cars, pasta, cooking oil, shoes, rice, and some petroleum products (Journalists for Justice, 2015). According to reports on sugar smuggling, which is undoubtedly the most profitable illegal activity in the area, it not only benefits the local clans but also gives al-Shabaab, the Kenya Defence Force, and its Somali partners a lucrative network in which everyone wins. These items have promoted corruption among the Kenya security forces thus providing a conducive environment for terrorism growth.

In conclusion, the politics along the Kenya-Somalia border are clan-based, and because of the high level of marginalisation from the Kenyan government, border communities' resort to traditional means, like joining radicalised groups, in an effort to gain recognition. This has led to an increase in terrorist activity in the region over the past ten years. To combat terrorism, the Kenyan and Somali governments must begin measures to control al-Shabaab activity in areas near the border, with the help of ATMIS soldiers. This can only be achieved by employing a bottom-up strategy that includes understanding the social and cultural orientation of the border communities and involving them in the campaign against international terrorism.

3.3 Theoretical Framework

3.3.1 Constructivism theory

Nicholas Onuf coined the phrase "constructivism" in 1989 and popularized it by stating that "people and societies construct or constitute each other." Constructivists' basic tenet is that social structures, which determine players' identities and interests, constitute the foundation of world politics. Alexander Wendt, the author of "Anarchy is what makes states make it," is one of his most ardent supporters. Constructivists contend that states will behave differently toward allies and adversaries depending on how serious they perceive the threat to be. The theory is founded on the idea that people learn about the world through having cultural experiences and then reflecting on those experiences. Constructivists contend that human identity, which is shaped by society's values, history, practices, and institutions, governs human conduct. They believe that ideas form the basis of reality, and their world view stresses arbitrary elements like politics, culture, religion, and historical experiences.

This theory is best suited in the study because it is essential in understanding the nexus between social- cultural orientation in the management of terrorism along the southern Kenya- Somalia border. The theory attempts to understand the influence of religion, cultural identity and historical experiences shapes world view. Alexander Wendt (1992), a core social constructivism scholar, insist that the international system is not given but constructed through social-cultural orientations. Based on their identities, culture and historical experiences, states create their own security dilemmas. In other words, terrorism and counter terrorism is what states make of it. The construction of terrorism as a 'social threat' and extend of threat inflation by constructivism theory can be seen in the Kenya's military intervention in Somalia in 2011. This military intervention has led to more terror attacks particularly along the southern Kenya- Somalia border

3.4 Research Methodology

The study was conducted along the southern Kenya-Somalia border, which covers both Kenya and Somalia. In the Kenyan side, Liboi, Lagdera and Ijara sub-Countries in Garissa County are the study sites. In Somalia side, Dhobley District, formerly known as Liboi-Somalia is the study side. Due to persistent turmoil in Somalia for more than a decade, Dhobley District has been afflicted by insecurity emanating from the al Shabaab terrorist

group.

The population target for this study included all border community households living along the southern Kenya-Somalia border. In addition, the target population also included the key informants drawn from Kenya and Somalia. Respondents from both sides of the southern Kenya- Somalia border were spread.

3.4.1 The Southern Kenya –Somalia border, Garissa County

Table 1: Regions along the Southern Kenya- Somalia border

Sub-counties	Population+	Number of Households (HHs)
Garissa County (Kenya)	835,482	141,394
Dhobley (Somalia)	106,746	14,251
Total	942,128	155,644

Source: The World Fact Book, 2023

To identify the settings and participants, this study used cluster sampling, purposive sampling, and snowballing. The sample size for the study included 364 from Garissa county, Kenya, and 22 from Dhobley. The study had a total sample size of 400. Data was collected both interactively (interviews and focus group discussions) and non-interactively (via questionnaire). Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, both quantitative and qualitative. The findings were presented using qualitative data gathered from open-ended questions in the questionnaire, an interview guide, and focus group discussions.

The sample size for this study was 400 households arrived at using the formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{[1 + N(e)^2]}$$

Where:

n = Sample size

N = Population size (which in this case was 942,128

e = the error of Sampling

This study allowed the error of sampling of 0.05. Thus, the sample size was calculated as follows:

$$n = \frac{942,128}{[1 + 942,128(0.05)^2]}$$

$$n = \frac{942,128}{1 + 2,355.47} =$$

$$n = \frac{942,128}{[2,356.32]} = 400$$

The sample size for this study is 400 households.

To determine the settings and participants, this study employed purposive, snowballing, and multi-stage cluster sampling strategies. These methods were preferred by the researcher because they allowed the investigation of a wide range of aspects of the study, such as determining the role of state-border community capacity initiatives in managing international terrorism along the southern Kenya-Somalia border, examining the effectiveness of community policing in managing international terrorism along the southern Kenya-Somalia border, and finally examining the influence of border community social-cultural orientation along the southern Kenya-Somalia border.

Jackson (2011) asserts that the multi-stage cluster sampling technique is cost-effective and appropriate for creating a sample frame of clusters. Given that the study aimed to gather responses from both Kenya and Somalia, a geographical cluster was required, hence this approach was perfect even though other elements in the same cluster might have comparable features. The sample was collected from the clusters of regions that best reflect the population. Somalia and Kenya were both states that were sampled.

The study applied a multi-stage clustering sampling procedure, as described above. In the first stage, the study selected the Lagdera, Fafi and Ijara sub counties purposively because they are within the Southern Kenya Somalia border and are experiencing frequent international terrorism attacks. In the second stage, Lagdera, Fafi, and Ijara sub-Counties were clustered into Liboi, Jarajila and Hulugho divisions. The study population, the border community, resided in these divisions and were purposely selected. In the third stage, the sample was selected from the sampling frame. Table 3.1 presents sample size for the study.

Table 2: Distribution of Sample Size

Category	Population	Size Sample
Garissa County (Kenya)	835,482	367
Dhobley District (Somalia)	106,746	33
Total	942,128	400

Thematic analysis of information from interviews and focus groups was conducted. Quantitative analysis used numerical measures to assess the nexus between social- cultural orientation and the management of terrorism. Descriptive statistics used frequencies and percentages to describe data sets, and the results were presented in tables.

3.5 Results and Discussions

The findings established that socio-cultural orientation plays a significant role in the management of international terrorism. Understanding the social-cultural orientation of border communities it fosters community cohesion and resilience against extremist ideologies. Somali Communities along the southern Kenya-Somalia border, majority have a similar shared social identity, historical experience and shared similar threat hence highly cohesive. This is in consistent with Hofstede, 2001 who argue that one's social- cultural orientation affects group values and actions through the process of collectivism (Hofstede, 1991). When the Kenya government fails to meet their security demands in the face of violent extremism, these collective border communities are more likely to identify with al-Shabab. The strong relationship underscores the importance of leveraging social-cultural dynamics in counter-terrorism strategies. Initiatives such as inter-community dialogues and culturally sensitive approaches should be prioritized. By understanding and integrating socio-cultural factors into counterterrorism strategies, stakeholders can create a more cohesive and resilient community response to terrorism.

The results reveal travel that historical border dispute between Kenya and Somalia is also seen as influential in affecting border communities' efforts in managing international terrorism. This finding highlights the importance of putting in account this historical context in formulating counter terrorism measures, suggesting that past experiences can significantly impact current communities' perceptions towards terrorism measures in Kenya. The study sought to determine the effects of community's social-cultural orientation on the management of international terrorism along the southern Kenya-Somalia border. Table 4.17 displays the findings of this item.

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics on community's social-cultural orientation on the management of international terrorism along the southern Kenya-Somalia border

Statements	Mean	Std. Dev
Religious practices influence border community support for counterterrorism efforts.	4.464	.6591
Cultural norms and values shape community perceptions of law enforcement efforts against terrorism.	4.355	.6717
Historical relationships between Kenya and Somalia affect border communities' trust in security measures.	4.446	.6984
Language diversity poses challenges to effective collaboration in counterterrorism efforts.	4.464	.6864
Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms contribute positively to peacebuilding and counterterrorism.	4.236	.8559
Community cohesion strengthens resilience against terrorist ideologies.	4.218	.7943

From the results, the respondents agreed that religious practices significantly influence border community support for counterterrorism efforts, as indicated by a mean of 4.464 (std. dev = 0.6591). This suggests that the role of religion is perceived as a critical factor in shaping community attitudes and engagement in counterterrorism initiatives. Additionally, the findings reveal that cultural norms and values shape community perceptions of law enforcement efforts against terrorism, with a mean of 4.355 (std. dev = 0.6717). This indicates a strong consensus among participants that understanding and respecting cultural contexts is essential for effective law enforcement and community relations in counterterrorism efforts.

Historical relationships between Kenya and Somalia are also seen as influential in affecting border communities'

trust in security measures, as shown by a mean of 4.446 (std. dev = 0.6984). This finding highlights the importance of historical context in building or undermining trust in security initiatives, suggesting that past interactions can significantly impact current perceptions. Language diversity poses challenges to effective collaboration in counterterrorism efforts, with a mean of 4.464 (std. dev = 0.6864). This reflects the respondents' recognition that linguistic barriers can hinder communication and cooperation among diverse community members, which is crucial for successful counterterrorism strategies. Furthermore, traditional conflict resolution mechanisms are perceived to contribute positively to peacebuilding and counterterrorism, as indicated by a mean of 4.236 (std. dev = 0.8559). This suggests that leveraging local customs and practices can enhance community engagement and support for counterterrorism efforts.

Lastly, community cohesion is viewed as a vital factor that strengthens resilience against terrorist ideologies, with a mean of 4.218 (std. dev = 0.7943). This finding underscores the belief that a united community can effectively resist extremist narratives and foster a safer environment.

Religion emerged as a complex factor in radicalization—not as an inherent driver, but as a narrative framework that terrorist groups manipulate for recruitment and justification.

Muslim Clergy (Garissa) reported that:

"In many instances, young individuals are being enlisted through religious ideologies that promote terrorism as a method to combat perceived adversaries of Islam. However, it is important to recognize that Islam is fundamentally a religion of peace, not one of conflict. These groups mislead the youth with distorted beliefs and incite them against what they claim to be the 'enemy.' The tactics employed by al-Shabaab to recruit numerous young people in both Kenya and Somalia serve as a notable example of this phenomenon."

Key Informant in Dhobley reported that:

"Funding the Jihad is an individual duty for every Muslim—this is what al-Shabaab tells young people. If you cannot physically join the jihad, then it is mandatory that you finance it. This distortion of religious obligation is how they extract resources from communities, sometimes voluntarily, sometimes through force."

Religious Leader (Dhobley) cited that:

"Somalia refugee and those in the diaspora are the main source of funding for al-Shabaab. Some give willingly because they believe the propaganda, others give because they are threatened. But this funding stream keeps terrorism alive and makes it very difficult to defeat militarily."

The religious aspect of terrorism along this border indicates ideological exploitation instead of genuine religious inspiration. Terrorist groups exploit religious narratives to justify violence, garner resources, and enlist operatives. Successful counter-radicalization involves enlisting religious leaders as allies who can offer credible counter-narratives based on genuine Islamic teachings.

Clan-based social structures create complex loyalties that can either facilitate or hinder counter-terrorism intelligence sharing, depending on how they are engaged.

Kenyan police cited that

"Clan loyalties often supersede national identity in this region. When terrorists share clan affiliations with community members, those members may refuse to report suspicious activities or may even provide active support. This is not necessarily because they support terrorism, but because clan loyalty is paramount in their social structure."

Village Chief (Garissa) stated that:

"The clan system of the border communities at the Kenya-Somalia border is rooted in Islam religion hence this has permeated everyday life impacting on every facet of the social, economic, cultural and political lives of border communities. You cannot understand terrorism here without understanding clans."

KDF officer indicated that:

"Sometimes intelligence fails because the informant and the terrorist belong to the same clan, and there is social pressure not to betray clan members. Other times, inter-clan rivalries mean communities provide intelligence to settle scores rather than genuine security concerns. We must navigate these clan dynamics carefully."

Clan structures embody a dual nature in counter-terrorism—they can foster social unity that counters extremism when effectively utilized or establish shield networks for terrorists when clan loyalty supersedes national loyalty. Successful counter-terrorism approaches need to comprehend and collaborate with, instead of opposing, clan systems.

Historical conflicts including the Shifta War and Northern Frontier District disputes continue to shape

contemporary security dynamics and community attitudes toward state authority.

Police offer at the border reported that:

"Kenya's fight against al-Shabaab and its quest for viable peace along the southern Kenya and Somalia border remains subject to a multitude of complexities. The Kenyan military intervention in Somalia and the demarcation of the border have inadvertently disregarded and marginalized some stakeholders—civil society organizations, clan and religious leaders, and influential opposition leaders—who have been considered by state actors as of little importance."

Focus Group Discussion from Community Elder (Garissa) indicated that:

"The demarcation of the border has disrupted the way the communities used to carry out their economic, social and political interactions. We are one people divided by a colonial border that makes no sense to us. This historical injustice creates resentment that terrorists exploit by portraying themselves as defenders of Somali unity."

Another key Informant in Dhobley District, Somalia reported that

"Somalia has consistently faced significant challenges regarding representation, complicating efforts to address security concerns. The absence of a stable and effective government in Somalia has undoubtedly impacted security in Kenya, contributing to issues such as border disputes, smuggling of counterfeit goods, illegal migration and a refugee crisis, which are now associated with the terrorist attacks observed along the border."

Historical grievances lead to a lack of legitimacy for modern state authority and security measures. The belief that borders were established through colonialism, that specific communities were sidelined during independence, and that current policies discriminate against border populations fosters a setting in which al-Shabab terrorists can present themselves as advocates for historical justice claims.

3.6 Conclusions

Understanding the social and cultural orientations of border communities is crucial in managing international terrorism. Despite the fact that social-cultural strategies have been developed to prevent international terrorism (Rosendorff & Sendler, 2012), there appears to be a significant variation in how Kenya implements them. The failure to combat terrorism along the border can be attributed in part to a top-down, state-centric peacebuilding model that ignores community-based initiatives. Managing terrorism across porous borders requires a bottom-up approach that considers the social and cultural inclinations of grassroots leaders and the community (Lederach, 1997).

The significant link between socio-cultural orientation and international terrorism management emphasizes the role of cultural factors in establishing collaboration and trust between border communities and state security officials. Engaging in socio-cultural dynamics can considerably improve the efficacy of counterterrorism tactics.

3.7 Recommendations

Based on the study findings and subsequent conclusions, the study recommends key areas of follow-up to effectively manage the International terrorism threat. In the midst of globalization and the emergence of Artificial Intelligence, no country is immune from international terrorism. It is in this perspective that Kenya and Somalia must put aside their differences and work together in strengthening their counterterrorism strategies. Consistent with the UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy, the two states should ensure that the socio-cultural dynamics are considered in their counterterrorism strategies. This can be achieved by incorporating an academia in the Security areas in the development and implementation of such measures. Utilizing cultural norms foster trust and enhance cooperation between communities and law enforcers, leading to improved information sharing, collective security and effective management of terrorism.

Finally, the Kenya Counterterrorism Centre should ensure that the socio-cultural orientation of the community is considered in designing counterterrorism strategies. This requirement can be achieved by incorporating academia in the Security areas in the development and implementation of such measures. Engaging local leaders and utilizing their social identity and cultural norms to foster trust can enhance cooperation between communities and law enforcers, leading to improved information sharing, collective security and effective management of terrorism.

This study also recommends replicating the current research in other parts of the world that are experiencing international terrorism to compare findings and provide a broader perspective. Similarly, the role of women in the management of international terrorism along the Kenya- Somalia border is relatively unexplored hence the need for more studies.

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